

Congress of the United States
Washington, D.C. 20515

April 20, 2022

Governor Brian Kemp
206 Washington Street
Suite 203, State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334

Dear Governor Kemp,

We write to express our extreme concern regarding the status of the automatic voter registration system at the Georgia Department of Driver Services (DDS) in light of its adoption of Georgia Driver Record and Integrated Vehicle Enterprise System (Georgia DRIVES) – an online e-services application Georgia began using in January 2021.

Recent reports indicate that the rate of drivers opting to utilize the automatic voter registration process at DDS fell from 79 percent in 2020 to just 39 percent in 2021, and has remained low since that time.¹ This steep decline raises serious questions regarding access to the ballot in this year's election, including the possibility that voters may believe they are registered to vote but are not and are therefore unable to exercise their constitutional right to vote.

In 2016, Georgia implemented automatic voter registration as part of the driver's license application process, a change that you helped to implement as Secretary of State. This change helped to increase the registration rate of eligible voters in Georgia from 76 percent in 2016 to 95 percent in 2020. This progress is jeopardized by the dramatic decline in voters registering through DDS in 2021.

We are aware that DDS launched a new computer system, Georgia DRIVES, in January 2021. While it is unclear what impact, if any, this new system has had on voter registration rates through DDS, the steep drop off in automatic voter registrations in the first year of its operation raises critical questions about whether a software error, a design flaw, or some other issue has negatively impacted the ability of Georgians to register to vote.

As you know, the National Voter Registration Act requires that states offer voter registration opportunities to people at motor vehicle agencies. Since 2016, Georgia has utilized automatic voter registration at DDS to increase voter participation and make it easier for people to register to vote. The dramatic decline in registration rates in 2021 is concerning and raises questions regarding Georgia's compliance with the National Voter Registration Act.

In order to increase participation and ensure no one is denied their constitutional right to vote in the upcoming election, we request the following:

¹ <https://www.ajc.com/politics/did-georgia-weaken-automatic-voter-registration/7LR5XNN6ZZCA7GJJR2HVEHPTXM/>

1. Conduct a thorough investigation of the decline in the rate of voter registrations at DDS and immediately remediate any changes at DDS or the Georgia Secretary of State's office which are found to have led to the decline.
2. To the extent the investigation reveals that individuals who visited DDS in January 2021 or later and a) wished to automatically register but were not automatically registered, or b) were impacted by design changes to the opt-out option that created confusion or ambiguity, immediately notify such individuals, inform them that their voter registration information was not updated, and provide information on how they can update their voter registration.
3. Provide an opportunity for individuals who attempt to vote in this year's election, but are not registered to vote, to cast a provisional ballot. Upon investigation, if those individuals are found to have interacted with DDS after January 2021 and were not automatically registered due to software error, design flaw, or other issue revealed through your investigation, their vote must be counted.

Georgia's voter registration deadline is less than one week away, and early voting for the primary election begins in less than two weeks. In order to ensure the security of our elections and that every Georgian can exercise their right to vote, we implore you to act with urgency to investigate the recent decline in automatic voter registrations through DDS and take action to protect the right to vote.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your expedient response.

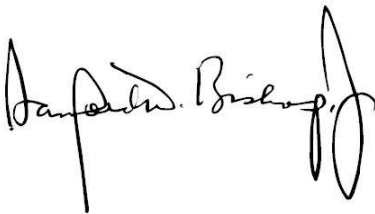
Sincerely,



Carolyn Bourdeaux
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams
Member of Congress



Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress